

# COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

For Immediate Release  
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### **Government Reform to Consider Important D.C. Bills, FOIA Guide**

**What: GOVERNMENT REFORM COMMITTEE BUSINESS MEETING**

**When: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2005 (To Immediately Follow the 10 a.m. hearing, “*Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina*”)**

**Where: ROOM 2154, RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING**

#### **Background:**

The Government Reform Committee will hold a business meeting to mark up the following:

#### **H.R. 3699, the “Federal and District of Columbia Government Real Property Act of 2005”**

H.R. 3699 would authorize the exchange of certain land parcels between the federal government and the District of Columbia. This proposal was submitted to Congress by the Administration with the strong support of the District. Under this legislation, federal properties in D.C. that provide little value to the federal government or are an unnecessary maintenance burden would be transferred to the District, thereby freeing federal tax dollars to be spent in more productive areas. The bill applies to 30 properties owned by the District of Columbia, the Interior Department’s National Parks Service or the General Services Administration. Several of these properties are already under administrative control of the District.

Transferring these properties would allow both Interior and the GSA to better manage their properties and to preserve and protect public lands for future generations.

The District gains the ability to build neighborhoods, develop more parks, enhance economic revitalization, and increase the local tax base.

The legislation would authorize the following transfers:

- NPS would transfer administrative jurisdiction of 7 parcels to the District of Columbia.
- NPS would convey title of 9 properties to the District.
- The District would transfer administrative jurisdiction of 9 properties to NPS.
- The District would convey title of 2 properties to NPS.
- GSA would convey title of 2 properties to the District.
- The District would convey title to GSA buildings located on the campus of St. Elizabeths.

### **H.R. 3508, the “2005 District of Columbia Omnibus Authorization Act”**

H.R. 3508, introduced by Chairman Davis and Representative Norton in July, would authorize a number of important changes to the federal laws governing the operations of the District government. This is the second year in a row Davis and Norton have introduced an omnibus authorization bill for the District to serve as vehicle for enacting legislation sought by the District. This year's bill includes vital provisions in areas such as budget flexibility, operations of the D.C. Courts, and permanent authorization of the chief financial officer.

The following is a list of provisions that would be enacted as part of the Norton/Davis bill:

- A law authorizing the District to spend up to 6 percent of unappropriated local funds in the event of unforeseen circumstances during the 2006-08 fiscal years, without coming back to Congress mid-year during the supplemental process.
- A law allowing the District to tap into its emergency and contingency reserve funds, provided D.C. reimburses those funds.
- A revision of the pay cap for nonjudicial court employees to enable the courts to effectively implement a performance management system. This would put the nonjudicial personnel of the D.C. Courts on par with the nonjudicial employees of the federal courts in the District.
- Authority for the D.C. Courts to conduct business outside of the District in case of emergency.
- A permanent authorization for the District's Chief Financial Officer, as well as personnel authority and procurement authority for the CFO. The bill also requires that all legislation passed by the D.C. Council be accompanied by a fiscal impact statement.

### **Committee Report entitled “A Citizen’s Guide on Using the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act of 1974 to Request Government Records”**

The House Committee on Government Operations first published this report in 1977, and it has been widely distributed ever since. The current Government Reform Committee has amended and updated this guide every Congress since its formation in the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress. The Citizen's Guide provides a user-friendly, easy to understand introduction to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Privacy Act. The Citizen's Guide is not meant to be comprehensive, and it does not attempt to examine the voluminous court decisions surrounding these laws. A user should consult this guide to understand the processes for making a request under these laws. Additional guidance and resources relating to FOIA and Privacy Act requests as published by the Executive Branch and other non-congressional sources are referenced in the Citizen's Guide's Appendix.

The Subcommittee on Government Management, Finance, and Accountability approved revisions to the Citizen's Guide in a markup on June 22, 2005. The revisions to the Citizen's Guide in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress are primarily editorial and do not alter the substantive portions of the report from when it was last published by the Committee in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress on June 23, 2003. The edits include: corrections to U.S. Code references in footnotes to reflect the most recent editions of all cited laws; updates of web addresses pointing to additional reference materials; and updates to the membership roster and other information about the Committee on Government Reform.

**H. CON. RES. 59**, recognizing the contributions of African-American basketball teams and players for their achievements, dedication, and contributions to the sport of basketball and to the Nation.

**H. CON. RES. 209**, supporting the goals and ideals of Domestic Violence Awareness Month and expressing the sense of Congress that Congress should raise awareness of domestic violence in the United States and its devastating effects on families.

**H. J. RES. 61**, supporting the goals and ideals of Gold Star Mothers Day.

**H.R. 2062**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 57 West Street in Newville, Pennsylvania, as the "Randall D. Shughart Post Office Building."

**H.R. 2413**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1202 1st Street in Humble, Texas, as the "Lillian McKay Post Office Building."

**H.R. 3439**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 201 North 3rd Street in Smithfield, North Carolina, as the "Ava Gardner Post Office."

**H.R. 3440**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 100 Avenida RL Rodriguez in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, as the "Dr. Jose Celso Barbosa Post Office Building."

**H.R. 3667**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 South Barrington Street in Los Angeles, California, as the ""Karl Malden Station."

**H.R. 3703**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 8501 Philatelic Drive in Spring Hill, Florida, as the "Staff Sergeant Michael Schafer Post Office Building".

**S. 1275**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 7172 North Tongass Highway, Ward Cove, Alaska, as the "Alice R. Brusich Post Office Building."

**S. 1323**, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located on Lindbald Avenue, Girdwood, Alaska, as the "Dorothy and Connie Hibbs Post Office Building."

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